

...having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone. Ephesians 2:20 NKJV

The Early Years 1902 - 1917

The dedication of the church's first building on February 10, 1910, gave the "little French mission" a permanent home. The 3,200 square foot "little brick church" at the corner of Oak (now Jefferson) and Lee Avenue cost \$6,500.00



Inside of the "Little Brick Church"

G.A. Coronation in Tabernacle

The Growing Years 1917 - 1931

The beginning of a work among students on the Southwestern Louisiana Institute campus in 1926 resulted in the organization of the Baptist Student Union (now BCM) in 1930. It also furthered a close relationship with the university that continues today.



1902 - The Louisiana Board of Missions sends E. K. Robinson to Lafayette in June. On November 23 F. K. Hopkins, O.B.Hopkins, Mr. and Mrs. V.L. Roy, and Mrs. Isaac Broussard (not pictured)

organize First Baptist Church.



• 1904 - Reverend James I. Kendrick becomes pastor and places a baptistry in his own backyard. Ozime LeBlanc is the first white man in Lafayette baptized according to New Testament instruction.

• 1907 - The church begins its existence as a corporation in order to purchase land upon which to erect a church building useful in worshipping God "according to the Baptist faith."



1913 - W. P. Carter serves as pastor for six months, with a membership of about ninety. He is followed in 1914 by E. W. McLendon who serves for approximately three years.



becomes pastor of a church that is still very much unknown to Lafayette, even though progress is being made. A pastor's home is built during his ministry.



• 1925 - A young pastor, W. D. Wilbanks, begins a ministry that includes the organization of the Sunday School in a more efficient way. He is remembered as a wonderful pastor who visited regularly and was faithful to the Lord's service.



1927 - James Benjamin Herndon becomes pastor. During his four years in Lafayette the church grows from 180 members to 266 members and he baptizes a total of 180 believers.

1928 - The need for more room becomes increasingly apparent and the church decides to build a "tabernacle." The wood frame building is roughly finished and not very attractive. However, it is a heroic effort at a time of financial struggles.

The Wells Years 1932 - 1946

The organization in 1939 of the Mitchell Mission, which later became Northside Baptist Church, was the first of many church planting efforts in Acadiana. The Breaux Bridge, Westside, Youngsville, and Duson missions followed over the next fifty years.



1942

The Holmes Years 1946 - 1957

On February 13, 1949, a record 473 people gathered at the "little brick church" for a memorable march to the new building. That building and subsequent expansions would serve the growing congregation for just over fifty years.



March to new building



1055 VB

Inside of 1949 building



becomes pastor for a fourteen-year period. Growth continues with 223 enrolled in Sunday School in 1932, 371 enrolled in 1936, and 492 enrolled in 1939.



• 1935 - Shortly after radio station KVOL is started, five faiths begin fifteen-minute devotionals one morning each week. By mid-1935, Brother Wells is heard daily on the station.



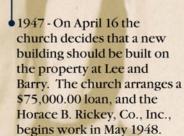
• 1940 - The church votes to purchase property at Lee Avenue and Barry St. for a sum of \$8,500.00. The house is later divided into two apartments with the pastor living there for a time.



• 1943 - The present B.C.M. property at 1226 Johnston Street is secured personally by Brother Wells, with the approval of First Baptist Church and the assurance that the Louisiana Baptist Convention would purchase the property.



Holmes begins his work at First Baptist Church in August. Property at 1412 West College Avenue is purchased as a pastor's home.



during the year: one for two weeks in the spring, one at the Westside Mission, and a Youth Revival, led by Perry Sanders of Baton Rouge, in September.



1957 - Dr. A.E. Prince serves as interim pastor following the retirement of Dr. Holmes, allowing the pulpit committee adequate time to search for a permanent pastor.





that is consistently blessed.

The purchase in 1980 of the Cathedral-Carmel School property signified a long term desire for growth and for the advancement of God's work from a downtown campus. On May 10, 1981, members circled the block and dedicated the property to the Lord. The occasion is considered by many members today as a "defining moment" for the future of the church.



Our spiritual forefathers had a great vision and have many achievements to their credit, but we believe that the next 100 years will be even greater than anything in the past.

Perry Sanders, Pastor November, 2002



• 1983 - An organized prayer ministry is started in May. A 24 hour prayer room is established on Square Two and is named in memory of Gloria Sanders, who passed away earlier in the year after a long illness.



1984 - Sunday School attendance averages 1,563 for the year with a total membership of 4,636. Plans begin for dual Sunday Schools which begin in March 1986.



• 1985 - With the facilities provided by Square Two, a school is started for Kindergarten through grade three. It grows over the next several years to eighth grade and totals around 200 students.



of the first Living the city's new Cajundome facility. Over the next few years more than 60,000 people see this presentation of the birth of Christ.



1988 - The growing number of international students at USL provides a new opportunity for ministry. A Chinese mission is formed and full time leadership provided. By 1999 this ministry would be housed in its own building on Lee Avenue.



of property are acquired and a campaign is started to completely eliminate the church's debt. In 1994 the church begins several years of renovation of the sanctuary and other facilities.



2001 - Spreading the gospel through media continues as sermons are made available on the Internet. A Christmas television special featuring our Sanctuary Choir airs nationally during the Christmas season.



• 1999 - Fire destroys the sanctuary on June 9.



 1999 - A rainbow greets worshippers on June 13, inspiring the "Promise" campaign.



1999 - A time capsule discovered during demolition is opened on October 31.



◆ 2000 - Members pledge ove \$8 million on April 9.



2001 - A ceremonial groundbreaking for the new facility is held on January 7. The start of construction is still more than a year away.



→ 2002 - Construction begins April 11 on a new 100,000 square foot facility.



2002 - Completion of the project is scheduled for early 2004.



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